

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 ACDA-12 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 EB-08 OMB-01 TRSE-00 HA-05
/115 W

-----115474 251729Z /42

R 251701Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7443
INFO AMEMBASSY WARSAW
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
USMISSION USBERLIN
AMCONSUL STUTTGART
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BERLIN 03566

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, GE, XA, CG
SUBJECT: THE GDR AND EVENTS IN SHABA

REF: A. BERLIN 3489, B. MOSCOW 11379, BERLIN 3545.

1. SUMMARY: PARTY CHIEF HONECKER, AT A CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING MAY 24, CRITICIZED NATO POWERS FOR INTERVENING IN ZAIRE, BUT MENTIONED NO PARTICULAR WESTERN COUNTRY BY NAME. IN THE FIRST OFFICIAL GDR COMMENT ON THE RECENT EVENTS IN
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ZAIRE, HONECKER STATED THE PURPOSE OF WESTERN INTERVENTION WAS TO PROTECT ACCESS TO RAW MATERIALS AND ENSURE THEIR STRATEGIC POSITION. THE OFFICIAL PARTY PAPER NEUES DEUTSCH- LAND HAS CARRIED A COMMENTARY ALONG SIMILAR LINES AND HAS DIRECTLY CRITICIZED THE MOBUTU REGIME. END SUMMARY.

2. AT A CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING MAY 24 (BEING REPORTED

SEPTEL), SED CHIEF HONECKER STATED THAT AFRICA IS A FOCAL POINT IN THE IMPERIALIST POWERS' STRUGGLE TO MAINTAIN THEIR POSITIONS. A NEW DEMONSTRATION OF THIS, HE SAID, IS THE MASSIVE INTERVENTION OF NATO FORCES IN THE INTERNAL CONFLICT IN ZAIRE. NOTING THAT THE "ZAIRIAN PROVINCE OF SHABA" IS AMONG THE RICHEST AREAS OF AFRICA, HONECKER ASSERTED THAT THE ACTION IN SHABA WAS INTENDED TO PROTECT MULTINATIONAL MONOPOLY INTERESTS. WHEREVER THESE INTERESTS ARE IN DANGER, THE CONCERNED IMPERIALIST GOVERNMENTS INTERVENE WITH THEIR MILITARY POWER WITHOUT SCRUPEL IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN THEIR RAW MATERIAL POTENTIAL AND AT THE SAME TIME TO SECURE THEIR MILITARY-STRATEGIC POSITIONS. AGAIN WE SEE, HONECKER WENT ON, HOW WHEN ITS PRESENT POSITION IS AT STAKE, IMPERIALISM DROPS THE MASK OF HUMANITY, SOVEREIGNTY AND RESPECT FOR THE PEOPLES OF AFRICA. THIS REPRESENTS AN ATTACK AGAINST THE SELF-DETERMINATION OF EVERY PEOPLE ON THE AFRICAN CONTINENT AND A SERIOUS DANGER TO PEACE, HONECKER CONCLUDED. HONECKER NAMED NO COUNTRY, REFERRING ONLY COLLECTIVELY TO NATO AND IMPERIALIST POWERS.

3. IN RELATED COVERAGE OF THE ZAIRE SITUATION, NEUES DEUTSCHLAND MAY 24 PUBLISHED THE FIRST, AND SO FAR THE ONLY, DIRECT GDR PRESS COMMENTARY ON THE SHABA DEVELOPMENTS. THE ARTICLE, WRITTEN BY DIETER REDDE, DESCRIBES THE SHABA EVENTS AS AN "INFAMOUS SPECTACLE" AND A CONFIDENTIAL

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"LONG-PLANNED IMPERIALIST AGGRESSION IN THE HEART OF AFRICA," AND ASKS WHAT THE UNITED STATES AND OTHER NATO STATES ARE UP TO IN THIS "NEO-COLONIST" INVASION. SUCH PHRASES AS "BLOODY INTERVENTION" AND "BRUTAL AGGRESSION" PUNCTUATE THE PIECE. THE OPERATION IS CHARACTERIZED AS A "COLONIAL WAR AGAINST THE FREEDOM-LOVING PEOPLE IN THE ZAIRE PROVINCE OF SHABA" AND ITS NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT, THE FLNC.

4. AFTER EMPHASIZING THE MINERAL WEALTH OF SHABA AND, IN PARTICULAR, AMERICAN INVESTMENT, REDDE WRITES THAT THE INTERVENTION WAS INTENDED TO PROTECT THE ECONOMIC INTERESTS OF THE MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS, TO ENSURE STRATEGIC MATERIALS FOR NATO AND TO STRANGLE THE DESIRE FOR FREEDOM OF THE PEOPLE OF AFRICA. THE HUMANITARIAN ASPECTS OF THE ACTION ARE DISMISSED AS A PRETEXT. THE ARTICLES ASSOCIATED "IMPERIALIST POLICY" IN ZAIRE WITH THE OTRAG ROCKET TESTING PROJECT WHICH, NEUES DEUTSCHLAND CLAIMS, IS SANCTIONED" AND "FINANCIALLY SUPPORTED" BY THE FRG.

5. ZAIRE IS DESCRIBED AS PLAYING A PART IN IMPERIALIST

PLANS FOR AFRICA AS IT CAN SERVE AS A BASE FOR ATTACKS ON NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES "AS WAS THE CASE OF SHABA." ZIARE, THE ARTICLE CONTINUES, "ALREADY FIRMLY IN IMPERIAL-IST HANDS, IS A CONSTANT THREAT TO ITS NEIGHBORING STATES" AS A "CENTER OF SUBVERSION OF THE NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENT OF AFRICA."

6. MOBUTU'S REGIME IS, FOR THE FIRST TIME, DIRECTLY CRITICIZED AS CORRUPT AND DEGENERATE. MOBUTU IS DESCRIBED AS LIVING ON THE DOLLARS OF THE MULTINATIONALS WHILE THE "PLUNDERED" PEOPLE OF ZAIRE VEGETATE IN GREAT POVERTY. MOBUTU IS CHARGED WITH PERMITTING NATO'S "BRUTAL INTER-

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VENTION" IN RETURN FOR MONEY. IN CONTRAST, THE FLNC IS DESCRIBED AS STRUGGLING AGAINST OPPRESSION AND EXPLOITATION.

7. APART FROM THE REDDE PIECE, THE GDR PRESS CONTINUES TO GIVE EXTENSIVE COVERAGE TO THE SHABA EVENTS. MUCH OF THIS

MATERIAL IS FROM NON-GDR SOURCES SUCH AS TASS AND PRAVDA, INCLUDING THE FULL TEXT OF THE SERVIN MAY 21 PRAVDA ARTICLE (REF B), BUT WESTERN SOURCES ARE USED AS WELL. SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THIS WEEK (REF C) THE TREATMENT HAS BEEN STRONGLY CRITICAL OF THE INTERVENTION.
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8. COMMENT: AN INTERESTING FEATURE OF THE REDDE NEUES DEUTSCHLAND COMMENTARY IS THAT IT DIRECTLY ATTACKS THE KINSHASA REGIME AND GENERAL MOBUTU PERSONALLY. SUCH DIRECT CRITICISM OF A HEAD OF STATE BY THE GDR MEDIA IS VERY RARE AND WE BELIEVE THAT THIS REFLECTS A SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN EAST GERMANY'S POLICY TOWARD ZAIRE. UNTIL FAIRLY RECENTLY THE GDR HAD WISHED TO PATCH UP ITS RELATIONS WITH ZAIRE AND RESUME NORMAL RELATIONS. IT AVOIDED CRITICISM OF ZAIRE OR OVERT SUPPORT OF THE FLNC. EARLIER THIS YEAR NEGOTIATIONS WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF ZAIRE WERE HELD IN ROME ON RESUMPTION OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS ALTHOUGH THESE APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN INCONCLUSIVE. IT NOW SEEMS THE GDR HAS DECIDED TO OPPOSE MOBUTU AND SIDE WITH THE FLNC FORCES THEREBY--WE ASSUME--ABANDONING HOPE OF REESTABLISHING NORMAL RELATIONS WITH THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT IN KINSHASA. END COMMENT. BOLEN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SHABA, POLITICAL SITUATION, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BERLIN03566
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780221-0487
Format: TEL
From: BERLIN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780521/aaaaarhk.tel
Line Count: 197
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 6bfb4497-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 BERLIN 3489, 78 MOSCOW 11379, 78 BERLIN 3545
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2578084
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: THE GDR AND EVENTS IN SHABA
TAGS: PEPR, PINS, GC, XA, CG
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/6bfb4497-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014